

HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS REPORT

December 1 Cotton & Sugarcane Crop Prospects
Pecan Production

Cotton & Sugarcane Crop Prospects

Louisiana cotton production is forecast at 880,000 bales, up 10 percent from last month, but down 14 percent from 2003. Cotton acreage for harvest is forecast at 490,000 acres. Yield per acre, at 862 pounds, is up 78 pounds from the previous month.

United States cotton production is forecast at a record high 22.8 million bales, up 1 percent from the November 1 forecast and 25 percent above last year's production. Yield is expected to average a record high 828 pounds per harvested acre, surpassing the previous record of 730 pounds set in 2003. Record high yields are expected in Arkansas, California, Mississippi, Missouri, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Texas. Harvested area, at 13.2 million acres, is unchanged from November but 10 percent above 2003.

Delta cotton harvest continued under adverse weather conditions. Lower Delta growers were virtually done with harvest by the end of the month. Producers in the northern region of the Delta encountered more rain showers, which delayed harvest in saturated fields. Boll counts and average boll weights in Mississippi and Louisiana are above the 15-year average. Boll counts in Arkansas are slightly above the 15-year average and boll weights are the highest on record.

Louisiana sugarcane production is estimated at 11.4 million net tons, unchanged from last month but down 11 percent from last year. Acreage expected for harvest (sugar and seed) is 475,000 acres. Yield is estimated at 24 net tons per acre, down 2.2 net tons from last year.

United States sugarcane production for sugar and seed in 2004 is forecast at 30.4 million tons, unchanged from the November forecast but 10 percent below 2003. Sugarcane growers intend to harvest 961,400 acres for sugar and seed during the 2004 crop year, the same as November but 3 percent less than last year's revised harvested area of 992,300 acres. Yield is forecast at 31.6 tons per acre, unchanged from the previous forecast but 2.5 tons below the revised 2003 yield of 34.1 tons per acre.

Sugarcane: Area Harvested, Yield and Production by State and United States

State	Area	Yield	Production	
	Harvested		Final	Ind
	2004 ¹	2004	2003	2004
	1,000 Acres	Net Tons	1,000 Net Tons	
Florida	420.0	39.3	17,231	15,120
Hawaii	24.1	93.9	2,082	2,264
Louisiana	475.0	24.0	12,838	11,400
Texas	42.3	37.0	1,707	1,566
United States	961.4	31.6	33,858	30,350

¹For sugar and seed.

All Cotton: Area Harvested, Yield and Production by State and United States

State	Area Harvested		Yield		Production ¹	
	Final	Ind	Final	Ind	Final	Ind
	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004
	-----1,000 Acres-----		-----Pounds-----		-----1,000 Bales ² -----	
Alabama	510.0	535.0	772	754	820.0	840.0
Arizona	215.4	239.0	1,236	1,338	554.6	666.0
Arkansas	945.0	920.0	916	1,070	1,804.0	2,050.0
California	694.0	776.0	1,290	1,485	1,865.5	2,400.0
Georgia	1,290.0	1,260.0	785	686	2,110.0	1,800.0
Louisiana	510.0	490.0	967	862	1,027.0	880.0
Mississippi	1,090.0	1,090.0	934	1,000	2,120.0	2,270.0
Missouri	390.0	385.0	862	997	700.0	800.0
New Mexico	44.0	75.0	908	934	83.2	146.0
North Carolina	770.0	725.0	646	874	1,037.0	1,320.0
Oklahoma	170.0	195.0	616	714	218.0	290.0
South Carolina	218.0	218.0	718	815	326.0	370.0
Tennessee	530.0	540.0	806	862	890.0	970.0
Texas	4,370.0	5,520.0	480	665	4,374.0	7,643.0
Virginia	85.0	81.0	674	889	119.4	150.0
Other States ³	172.0	174.0	576	607	206.5	220.0
U.S. All	12,003.4	13,223.0	730	828	18,255.2	22,815.0

¹Production ginned and to be ginned.

²480-lb. net weight bale.

³Other States include FL and KS.

All Pecan Production

State	Utilized		Ind
	Final	Final	
	2002	2003	2004
	-----1,000 Pounds-----		
Alabama	5,000	8,000	1,000
Arizona	16,000	22,500	13,000
Arkansas ¹	1,700	3,800	2,200
California ¹	3,800	3,700	3,400
Florida ¹	1,400	2,100	500
Georgia	45,000	75,000	40,000
Kansas ¹	2,900	2,000	2,500
Louisiana	6,000	20,000	8,000
Mississippi ¹	3,000	7,000	1,000
New Mexico	36,000	55,000	37,000
North Carolina ¹	1,900	2,500	700
Oklahoma	10,000	6,000	26,000
South Carolina ¹	200	4,500	2,000
Texas	40,000	70,000	40,000
United States	172,900	282,100	177,300

¹Estimates for current year carried forward from earlier forecast.

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United States Pecan Production

Louisiana's pecan production is forecast at 8.0 million pounds compared to 20.0 million pounds last year.

U.S. pecan production is forecast at 177 million pounds (in-shell basis), down 6 percent from the October 1 forecast and 37 percent below last year's crop. Improved varieties are expected to produce 128 million pounds or 72 percent of the total, while the Native and seedling varieties make up the difference. Since October, Texas and Oklahoma have experienced above average rainfall, resulting in harvest delays and lost or damaged nuts. These two states account for the 6 percent decrease from the October forecast. The current U.S. crop is expected to be lower than last year's mainly due to the alternate bearing pattern typical of pecans. In addition to being a low year in this cycle, the Southeastern states noted high disease pressure early in the growing season caused by excessive rainfall, followed by widespread damage to trees and nuts due to the hurricanes and tropical storms in August and September. Western growing areas reported some drought and insect concerns but overall a good, low-year crop.

Oklahoma forecasts a 26.0 million-pound pecan crop, down 7 percent from October. If realized, this forecast is still more than 4 times larger than last year's crop of 6.00 million pounds and more than doubles the 2002 crop. The decreased production forecast from October is mostly attributed to less-than-ideal harvest conditions and lost nuts due to excess rainfall. Production in Arizona is forecast at 13.0 million pounds, unchanged from October but 42 percent below last year and 19 percent less than two years ago. The Louisiana forecast of 8.00 million pounds is also unchanged from October. If realized, Louisiana pecan production will be down 60 percent from last year but 33 percent higher than the hurricane-damaged crop of 2002.

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